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of the Introduction. The typography is practically errorless.

The final word should be one of praise. Admiration for the plan of the book and for the main features of its execution have prompted the foregoing honest attempt to suggest minor improvements for a future edition.

STARR WILLARD CUTTING.

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Le Cousin Pons, par Honoré de Balzac, edited with introduction, notes and questionnaire, by HUGO PAUL THIEME. Ann Arbor, George Wahr, 1911. 12 mo., xlv + 275 pp.

Not too much Balzac literature is available for school use, hence no one will object to a good edition of a work so characteristic of the novelist's talent as is the present one. The publisher is to be congratulated on the material make-up of the neat little volume: the paper is good, the type clear, and the binding tasteful.

A rather elaborate introduction, replete with valuable bibliographical information, will be more useful to the teacher than to the students; the latter will be left somewhat at sea owing to the bewildering confusion of contradictory opinions quoted. Some of the critics mentioned are hardly 'massgebend,' and therefore their often extreme views are of little importance. The average pupil needs more definite information, and by sifting the best criticisms, this may be given without danger of going far wrong. A few of the editor's own statements may be questioned; e. g., p. xi, "He knew great ladies . . . from whom he derived much of the inexhaustible instruction in the beau monde." It is hard not to agree with Fauguet:¹ *Son goût déplorable de faire des portraits de grandes dames*, etc. On p. xvii the editor states: "When we realize that all his characters are based on what he has seen . . ." The statement is extreme; Vautrin and Rastignac, to quote only two well-known characters, are impossible in real life, and however well and consistently they are worked out,

they are made *de chic*.—P. viii: "Balzac died . . . three months after his marriage." Balzac married March 14, 1850, arrived in Paris at the end of May, and died August 18, five months after his marriage.—P. xxiv: "These [Balzac's] characters, some 2000 in all . . ." Séché and Bertaut in their recent biography state: *Pour dresser en pied une foule de types si nombreux qu'on a pu éditer un répertoire alphabétique de 5000 personnages . . .*²—P. xxv: "Around the village doctor is centered much of the action . . . as in . . . *Cousin Pons*." There is no village doctor in *Cousin Pons*.

TEXT. The edition is slightly abridged and the omissions are justified. In several instances, however, more care in establishing the connection would seem desirable. Thus on p. 4, l. 1, *triple gilet* is unintelligible unless the reader refers to the omitted part: Pons wore a waistcoat of black cloth over a white one and a sweater underneath both.—P. 22, ll. 18 ff. *Pons avait refusé ce bonheur* (viz., of marrying Madeleine, the chamber maid) . . . *Aussi voulait-elle devenir la cousine de ses maîtres*. This *aussi*, 'therefore,' is here impossible. The original reads: *Aussi . . . jouait-elle les plus méchants tours au pauvre musicien*.—P. 32, ll. 16-18: Enigmatic because of an omission.—P. 38, l. 7: *En outre* makes no sense, again because of an omission.—P. 208, l. 10: *En ce moment arrive l'infatigable courtier de la maison Sonet . . .*; add: *et compagnie, entrepreneurs de pompes funèbres*, else we are in the dark as to this individual.—P. 213, ll. 1-3: The deviation from the original, apparently here due to the printer, makes this passage unintelligible.³

¹I have not counted the names as given in Cerfberr and Christophe, *Répertoire de la Comédie humaine* (Calmann Lévy, 1893).

²Typographical errors have been noted at the following places: page 4, l. 21; 9, 11; 14, 30; 20, 30; 28, 3 (read *jolie*); 28, 11; 31, 5; 41, 4; 46, 6; 80, 26 (*grigous*); 95, 31 (add *pas*); 103, 23 (*tout*); 117, 11 (note missing); 120, 22; 122, 22; 124, 20; 128, 11; 178, 5; 184, 8; 196, 10; 235, 27 (*assigné*). The *ces* of p. 8, l. 15, should evidently be *ses*, tho *ces* stands also in the Calmann Lévy edition. Questionnaire, 263, 93-94; 263, 109.

¹*Études sur le XIX^e siècle*, p. 422.

NOTES. It is impossible to lay down any hard and fast rule as to what word or expression deserves or does not deserve a note. In a text without vocabulary a sensible working rule seems to be that every word or special use of a word, not found in the ordinary school dictionary, every grammatical peculiarity not found in the ordinary school grammar, rare constructions, popular expressions, puns, slang, historical or literary references, should be briefly explained.⁴

Notes or additional explanations are needed in the following cases:

P. 1, l. 4 *le nez à la piste*, about the same as *le nez au vent*;—l. 26 *un mot* here *un bon mot, une repartie*.—P. 2, l. 10 *une fidélité quand même*, a faithfulness despite everything;—l. 19 *spencer couleur noisette*;—l. 22 The grammatical note is misleading; the conditional contrary to fact may be followed by indicative or subjunctive only in compound tenses.—P. 3, l. 5 *drolatique*. Mention should be made that the word was modernized, or was given additional popularity by Balzac's *Contes drolatiques*;—l. 17 *nez à la don Quichotte*;—l. 18 *bloc erratique*.—P. 5, l. 16 *théâtre des boulevards*.—P. 6, l. 13 *des succès auprès des femmes selon la phrase consacrée en 1809*. A note might state that this expression is still in common use;—l. 23 *Il n'est pas de pays. Il n'est* is less common than *il n'y a*, and more common than *il est* for *il y a*.—P. 8, l. 4 *pâte tendre*;—l. 20 *bricabracologie*, neologism, coined or at least made popular by Balzac, as are also *bricabracomanie*, *bricabracque*, *bricabracois*, etc.—P. 10, l. 3 *sept péchés capitaux* is not clear to all students;—l. 7 *gueule fine*, vulgar for *bouche-fine* or *gourmet*;—l. 19 *touchait le forte*. To the existing note should be added that this is no longer in use, but is replaced by *toucher le piano* and more commonly *jouer du piano*.—P. 11, l. 8 *pique-assiette*. Note says 'nutcracker' or 'parasite.' I do not know 'nutcracker' with this meaning; better 'sponger.'—P. 12, ll. 16-17 *ne lui tenait plus compte de rien* should be explained.—P. 13, l. 2 *bâton de vieillesse*. Few students will know the meaning of this ex-

pression formed after *bâton de maréchal*, the highest rank in the army and, metaphorically, in any profession. When a man gets a pension or a decoration for long and honorable service, he gets what is familiarly and somewhat ironically called *le bâton de vieillesse* or consolation prize for old age;—l. 20 *synthèse*, not obvious to all students.—P. 14, l. 1 *démonstrateur*, used here as synonyme for *professeur*;—l. 10 *épicier*, a favorite epithet among romanticists meaning 'philistine,' equivalent to the English 'shopkeeper.'—P. 15, l. 1 *Richter* has a note but not *Hoffman*, whose *Märchen* are perhaps better known than his name. Balzac refers to them as "griseries" which, used metaphorically as here, is not found in the dictionaries;—l. 19 *le temps que Schmucke mettait à*; this meaning of *mettre* is not given in all dictionaries.—P. 16, l. 31 *casse-noisettes*, used frequently in the course of the book, is nowhere explained; it is a popular expression meaning about the same as 'ugly old fellows.' Webster gives for Eng. 'nut-cracker': sharp angular nose and chin; the same facial deformity in many old people gave probably rise to the French term.—P. 17, l. 10 *vers les sept heures*;—l. 21 *tolérance* is not quite clear.—P. 18, l. 8 *cor anglais*, instrument little known to most students and quite different from the French horn; it belongs to the oboe class;—l. 20 *encore*;—l. 28 *troubadour* is here used adjectively and means 'galant.'—P. 19, l. 20 *conseil général des manufactures*.—P. 20, l. 6 *Et Pons de venir à la queue*. The note says: 'following in the wake'; this infinitive with *de* means the same as *se mit à, s'empessa de*;—l. 13 *pair de France*;—ll. 22-23 *droit de fourchette*, neologism formed after *droit de cité, droit d'asile* and others of the same order;—l. 27 *sieur Thirion, huissier*; both *sieur* and *huissier* should be explained.—P. 21, l. 21 *substituts*;—l. 28 *branche cadette*; students will hardly know that the royal younger branch is meant here.—P. 24, l. 27 *pour laver notre linge ensemble*. It would be worth while to state that this is an application of the saying: *Il faut laver son linge sale en famille*;—l. 28 *faire la guerre à vos dépens* means 'to spend your money needlessly,' and is not found in the two dictionaries consulted.—P. 25, l. 7 *Dire à un riche: "Vous êtes pauvre" c'est dire à l'archevêque de Grenade que ses homélies ne valent rien*. One must have read *Gil Blas* to recognize the allusion.—P. 27, l. 11 *chit! chit!* equivalent to the modern *psst!* interjection used to call attention to oneself, when calling aloud is forbidden or not advisable;—l. 27 *c'est à se*

⁴In testing the notes I have made use of two dictionaries that are, I imagine, fairly representative: the little Gasc (Holt and Co.), and Passy and Hempl (Hinds, Noble and Eldredge).

mettre à genoux means 'fit to kneel before,' and should be translated in the notes.—P. 28, l. 26 *On peut exploiter cela*, apparently by making reproductions of the model.—P. 29, l. 17 *un chef-d'œuvre doublé d'un Normand* means a masterpiece armor-plated by the shrewdness of a Norman.—P. 31, l. 5 *cour royale de Paris* is not the same as 'royal court' and should be explained; likewise l. 9 *dynastie nouvelle*, and l. 10 *commandeur*, which is not the same as *chevalier*; only the latter wears the red ribbon.—P. 32, l. 1 *elle nous reste sur les bras*, means 'on our hands';—ll. 5-6 *restée si longtemps sur pied*; vulgar for: 'waiting to be married'; figure taken from the habit of certain fowl; cf. *faire le pied de grue*, wait a long time standing;—l. 21 *conseiller à la cour*, and l. 24 *référendaire* need notes;—l. 27 *duchesse du bal Mabille*. It should be stated that this is no duchess at all.—P. 40, l. 8 *Roi des Français*; under the old régime the king's title was *Roi de France*;—l. 10 *Pour eux le lait sortait pur de la boîte*. Students are not apt to be acquainted with the slang term *boîte au lait* (possibly formed after *boîte aux lettres*) and meaning breast.—P. 41, l. 12 *paré*. Since Mme Cibot's linguistic peculiarities are generally elucidated, a note might state that *paré* in *le dîner est paré* is corrupt for *préparé*.—P. 44, l. 24 *se frottait les mains à s'emporter l'épiderme* means 'rubbed his hands as though he were bent upon skinning them.'—P. 47, l. 15 *siège magistral*, conductor's seat.—P. 52, l. 6 *en droit et en fait*, legal term meaning 'in law and in practice.'—P. 56, l. 2 *Ah! dit le notaire d'un air fin, on ne court pas deux siècles à la fois*. I fear that students will puzzle over this, failing to see that the notary is trying to make a very bad pun on the proverb: *Il ne faut pas courir deux lievres à la fois* = one should not have too many irons in the fire, or try to sit on two stools at once;—l. 20 *signer au contrat*, is not the same as *signer un contrat*.—P. 57, l. 2 *Ce qui s'était bu de vin* deserves a short note.—P. 53, l. 22 *philosophant à perte de raison* formed after *à perte de vue*, and meaning *ad infinitum* or 'world without end.'—P. 62, l. 19 *se porta fort pour*.—P. 63, l. 6 *lettres de naturalité*. The modern term is generally *naturalisation*;—l. 12 *flotte bleue*.—P. 73, l. 4 *madame la présidente y porte les . . . vous savez quoi*. I am not sure that that famous "average student" would know enough to supply *culottes*.—P. 93, l. 4 *l'Esprit me tripote là dans l'estomac*, means 'the Spirit makes me feel queer in the stomach'; *tripoter* not in dictionaries with this

meaning.—P. 94, l. 2 *la poule noire piquait*. *Picorait* is the more correct form.—P. 100, l. 21 *il faut en prendre et en laisser*, 'one must not overdo things.'—P. 105, l. 9 *en voilà un de cœur*. This *de* should be explained.—P. 107, l. 5 *c'est la bonne bête du bon Dieu*, popular meaning, 'foolish creature'; has nothing to do with *bête à bon Dieu* = lady bug.—P. 108, l. 4 *C'est comme la langue, disait cet ancien acteur*. Is it not Socrates to whom this saying about the tongue being the best and the worst thing, is attributed?—l. 16 *un peu fort de café, cela!* No note to this slang saying. Rigaud (*Dict. d'argot moderne*) says: "Fort de café, très fort, peu supportable. Misérable jeu de mots comme on en commettait tant il y a quelques années; de la même famille que: Elle est bonne . . . d'enfants, pour dire qu'une chose est amusante."—P. 112, l. 4 *crainte qu'il ne touche*, ungrammatical for *de crainte qu'il*, etc.—P. 114, l. 14 *escarboucles*.—P. 117, l. 15 *rapport à*, incorrect but much used by the illiterate for *à propos de*, concerning; cf. also p. 118, l. 26, and p. 123, l. 17.—P. 120, l. 4 *Quelle bête de loi!* Same as *Quelle loi bête, stupide*.—P. 125, l. 11 *l'argent de ses ports de lettres*. Puzzling to the students unless they know that before the introduction of the postage stamp (1849 in France) the receiver had to pay the postage of a letter;—l. 17 *nous n'avons pas un liard à qui que ce soit* might be translated in the notes.—P. 128, l. 21 *vieux de la vieille*, a veteran of the old guard.—P. 130, l. 2 *une tête de bois*, face not betraying any emotion or idea; cf. *trouver figure de bois*, find the door closed.—P. 153, l. 19 *et vous vous croyez capable de faire vos notes . . . mais vous ne feriez pas seulement les miennes*. A pun; the first *note* means musical notes, the second means bills.—P. 168, l. 14 *Allez-vous m'obstiner encore?* Even *obstiner* would be incorrect; the correct form would be: *allez-vous vous obstiner encore?*—P. 210, l. 25 *Quel dévorant!* A *dévorant* is a member of a *devoir* or laborer's association. Hardly if at all used to-day;—l. 28 *Aimait-il sa femme!* Equivalent to: *Comme il aimait*, etc.—P. 215, l. 25 *vous aurez votre débit de tabac*. Note should state that the sale of tobacco is a government monopoly, that the *débts* or *bureaux de tabac* are run by agents, often women, and often awarded by politicians.—P. 221, l. 21 *assigner en référé . . . pour voir dire*. The expression *assigner en référé* means 'to obtain a temporary injunction in urgent cases'; *voir dire*, legal term for 'obtain a decision.'—P. 227, l. 12 *Ce n'est pas la mort d'un homme*, about the

same as *ce n'est pas la mer à boire*.—P. 230, l. 16 *c'est pis qu'un fils de famille*, 'he is worse than spoiled millionaire's sons.'—P. 241, l. 20 *cette histoire . . . superposée à la précédente dont elle est la sœur jumelle*. Unintelligible for him who has not read *la Cousine Bette*, which together with *le Cousin Pons* forms *les Parents Pauvres*.—P. 242, ll. 12-13 *drogueries . . . drogues*. This is a play on words. Popinot has made his money in the drug business (*drogueries*) and now he says jokingly that he continues to deal in *drogues*, worthless pictures and bric-à-brac.

P. 3, note 5 should read: 'could not detect the framework in it' (the face).—P. 13, note 1. I have my doubts as to the accuracy of the statement that Balzac seems to use the subjunctive more frequently than any writer of his time. The rules for the use of the subjunctive are fairly well defined, and do not leave overmuch latitude.—P. 27, l. 16 reads: *Qu'avez-vous de nouveau, papa Monistrol? Avez-vous des dessus de porte?* The note explains: *le dessus de quelque chose*, the choice of something; here *dessus de porte*, 'door-top' or 'novelty.' A far-fetched explanation, or perhaps a confusion with *dessus du panier* which means indeed 'the cream of something.' As a matter of fact, Pons merely inquires whether the second-hand dealer has any painted panels such as are found over doors in the better-class French houses. Some of those panels painted by Watteau and others of the eighteenth century are highly prized.—Page 36, note 1. *The sou pour livre* is not one per cent., but five. See moreover page 38, l. 4 and l. 11.—Page 48, note 1. The best-known Montyon prize is not the one for the best book, but rather the one given for the most virtuous deed.—Page 50, note 1 states: In Balzac *en* refers both to persons and things. This is in no way characteristic of Balzac, but is quite common, and in the present instance offers nothing that is abnormal.—Page 81, note 1. *de quoi il retourne* does not mean 'what brings him to this.' It is a popular expression meaning 'what's up,' 'what's going on.' *Je m'en vais voir de quoi il retourne* = I am going to see how matters stand;—note 2. *sangé* in Mme. Cibot's speech means *changé* and not *sanglé*; cf. page 91 *Je m'en sarge*, for *charge*.—Page 102, note 2. *Pour lors* does not mean 'even then,' but simply *alors*.—Page 130, note 2. *une surprise* is not a jumping jack, but a jack-in-the-box.—Page 138, note 2. Mme Cibot's incorrect *monde-de-piété* is corrected by the

editor as "*monde-de-piété*"; the proper form is *mont-de-piété*.—Page 141, note 2. *c'est bien terrible à dire*. The note states: 'for *il est*,' which is an error; *c'* stands for *cela* and *il* would not be tolerated here.—Page 155, note 2 says *au jour d'aujourd'hui* = from day to day. It means 'nowadays.'—Page 180, l. 1. *je ne me fie qu'à vous pour me choisir un notaire . . . qui vienne recevoir . . . mon testament*. The editor calls this subjunctive one of wish or desire. It is a final subjunctive;—note 2 *économisoter*, save or hoard. The note should state that this is a neologism coined on the spur of the moment to rhyme with *chipotent*, *carottent*, *tripotent*.—Page 206, note 2 *un expès*; not 'a special letter,' but 'a messenger.'—Page 210, note 1 *fait le lundi*. The editor explains: "keep Saint-Monday (Holy Week)." *Faire le lundi* is a very wide-spread and pernicious habit among the laboring classes in many European countries, of idling every Monday in order, no doubt, to rest up after Sunday's dissipation.—Page 214, ll. 31-32 the text reads: *je vais donner un coup de pied jusque chez monsieur*, and the editor translates this by: I am going to set my foot in the business. The meaning is in reality: I am going to run down to see Monsieur. *Donner un coup de pied jusque* is slang for 'run over or down to'; formed after *donner un coup de main, d'épaule*, 'lend a hand,' 'give a lift,' etc.—Page 217, note 2 *en os de boudin*, translated: "literally turn to pudding bones, i. e., go up in smoke." Unfortunately, there are no bones in the pudding, and the expression used by Mme Cibot is a mispronunciation of *eau de boudin*; *boudin* = sausage.—Page 224, note 1. The editor translates *une perruque soignée* by 'a fine wiggling, a blow.' The only meaning I know for the expression is: 'a fine scolding,' and that is moreover all that Topinard got.⁵

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⁵ The French of the questionnaire is in need of revision. So page 258, 20; 259, 38; 261, 66-67; 262, 84 and 90; 263, 98-99; 265, 138; 266, 159; 267, 182-183; 267, 186; 268, 192; 268, 193; 268, 205; 268, 206; 270, 229-230. Note also, p. 272 ("Sources of his knowledge"), *le physiologique* and *qu'est-ce qu'il avait toujours déjà fait?* p. 273 ("Characters"), *Que croyait Balzac souvent?—Que sait-on de la société actuelle du temps de Balzac et qu'il décrit?*